



Treatises Zakat and Fasting

By His Eminence:
Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Baz

Abdul Hameed
17-10-2001

Treatises on ZAKAT AND FASTING

Compiled by

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بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

Praise is to Allah Alone, and peace and blessings be
upon the Prophet and his family and Companions

The First Treatise

Important Issues on *Zakât*

This treatise aims at exhorting and reminding the significance of the *Zakât* towards which most of the Muslims are very careless as they are not particular in giving it out, in spite of the fact that it is one of the five pillars of Islam and that without it Islam cannot be firmly established. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«يُنْبِئُ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةٌ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامُ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءُ الزَّكَاةِ،
وَصَوْمُ رَمَضَانَ وَحَجُّ الْبَيْتِ».

“Islam is based on five (pillars): To testify that there is no God except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; To offer *Salât* (prayer); To pay *Zakât* (obligatory charity); To

observe *Saum* (fasts during the month of Ramadan) and; To perform *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah).”

It is obligatory upon every Muslim, in possession of wealth, to pay *Zakât* (obligatory charity). This Islamic command possesses plenty of advantages of which some are mentioned below:

1. It meets the needs of the poor of the society.
2. It strengthens the good relation between the rich and the poor, as everyone is naturally inclined towards the one who does good to him.
3. It purifies one's self and sanctifies it; and it purges one's moral of covetousness and miserliness; as is stated in the Qur'ân:

﴿ خُذْ مِنْ أَمْوَالِهِمْ صَدَقَةً تُطَهِّرُهُمْ وَتُزَكِّيهِمْ بِهَا ﴾

“Take *Sadaqa* (alms) from their wealth in order to purify them and sanctify them with it” (9:103).

4. It promotes open-handedness, generosity and sympathy in a Muslim towards the needy persons.
5. It draws Allah's blessing; causes increase in wealth and the replacement of spent out; as Allah describes:

﴿ وَمَا أَنْفَقْتُمْ مِنْ شَيْءٍ فَهُوَ يُخْلِفُهُ وَهُوَ خَيْرُ الرَّازِقِينَ ﴾

“And whatsoever you spend of anything (in

Allah's cause), He will replace it. He is the Best of those Who grant Sustenance.” (34:39).

And also the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم has stated in an authentic *Hadith* that Allah says:

«يَا ابْنِ آدَمَ انْفِقْ نُنْفِقْ عَلَيْكَ»

“O Children of Adam! If you give (in Allah's cause), We shall give you.”

And there are many more benefits in it.

On the contrary, a severe punishment would incur upon those who act miserly and are negligent in paying out the *Zakât*. Allah describes regarding them:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ يَكْنِزُونَ الذَّهَبَ وَالْفِضَّةَ وَلَا يَنْفِقُونَهَا فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ فَبَشِّرْهُمْ بِعَذَابٍ أَلِيمٍ ٥ يَوْمَ يُخْمَىٰ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فُتُكُوتٌ بِهَا جَبَاهُهُمْ وَجُنُوبُهُمْ وَظُهُورُهُمْ هَذَا مَا كَنْزْتُمْ لِأَنْفُسِكُمْ فَذُوقُوا مَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْنِزُونَ﴾

“And those who hoard up gold and silver (*Al-Kanz*—the money, the *Zakât* of which has not been paid), and spend it not in the Way of Allah,—announce unto them a painful torment. On the Day when that (*Al-Kanz*: money, gold and silver, etc., the *Zakât* of which has not been paid) will be heated in the fire of Hell and with it will be branded their foreheads, their flanks, and their backs: (and it

will be said unto them): ‘This is the treasure which you hoarded for yourselves. Now taste of what you used to hoard’.” (9: 34, 35)

The above verses clarify that the wealth of which *Zakât* has not been paid, is a hoarded treasure for which its owner would be punished on the Day of Resurrection. The same has also been described by the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم in the following *Hadith*:

«مَا مِنْ صَاحِبِ ذَهَبٍ وَلَا فِضَّةٍ لَا يُؤَدِّي حَقَّهَا إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ صُفِّحَتْ لَهُ صَفَائِحُ مِنْ نَارٍ فَأُخِمِيَ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَيُكْوَى بِهَا جَنْبُهُ وَجَبْهُ وَظَهْرُهُ كُلَّمَا بَرَدَتْ أُعِيدَتْ لَهُ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ حَتَّى يَقْضِيَ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ فَيَرَى سَبِيلَهُ إِمَّا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ وَإِمَّا إِلَى النَّارِ».

“If any owner of gold or silver does not pay what is due on him, when the Day of Resurrection would come, plates of fire would be beaten out for him; these would then be heated in the fire of Hell, and his sides, his forehead and his back would be cauterised with them. Whenever these cool down, (the process is) repeated during a day the extent of which would be fifty thousand years, until judgement is pronounced among slaves, and

he sees whether his path is to take him to Paradise or to Hell.”

Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم informed of the owners of the camels, cows, and goats; who do not pay their *Zakât*, that they would be punished on the Day of Judgement.

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

مَنْ آتَاهُ اللَّهُ مَالًا فَلَمْ يُؤَدِّ زَكَاتَهُ مُثِّلَ لَهُ شَجَاعًا أَقْرَعَ
لَهُ زَبِيبَتَانِ يُطَوَّقُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، ثُمَّ يَأْخُذُ بِلَهْزِمَتَيْهِ -
يَعْنِي شِدْقَيْهِ - ثُمَّ يَقُولُ: «أَنَا مَالُكَ أَنَا كَنْزُكَ».

“Whoever is made wealthy by Allah and does not pay the *Zakât* of his wealth, then on the Day of Resurrection, his wealth will be made like a bald-headed poisonous male snake with two black spots over the eyes (or two poisonous glands in its mouth). The snake will encircle his neck and bite his cheeks and say, ‘I am your wealth, I am your treasure’.”

Then the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم recited the noble verse:

﴿وَلَا يَحْسَبَنَّ الَّذِينَ يَبْخُلُونَ بِمَا آتَاهُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ هُوَ خَيْرًا
لَهُمْ بَلْ هُوَ شَرٌّ لَهُمْ سَيُطَوَّقُونَ مَا بَخِلُوا بِهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ﴾

“And let not those who covetously withhold of

that which Allah has bestowed on them of His Bounty (wealth) think that it is good for them (and so they do not pay the obligatory *Zakât*). Nay, it will be worse for them; the things which they covetously withheld shall be tied to their necks like a collar on the Day of Resurrection.” (3:180)

***Zakât* is obligatory on the following four types of property:**

1. The produce of earth, like grains and fruits.
2. The grazing animals.
3. Gold and silver.
4. Commercial commodities.

For all types of properties, *Nisab* (minimum amount of property liable to the payment of *Zakât*) is fixed, below which no *Zakât* would be imposed on them.

The minimum quantity for the first category i.e. grains, fruits, (wheat, rice, dates, grapes, barley, etc.) is 5 (five) *Wasq* and one *Wasq* (approx. 135 kgs.) is 60 (sixty) *Sâ'* according to the *Sâ'* of the Prophet, and one *Sâ'* is equivalent to nearly four times of both handful of a man of average built.

Moreover, if in cultivation, irrigation was made through rains or canal or fountain and like this without any effort, one-tenth of the total produce is due to be paid as *Zakât*.

If the field was irrigated by waterwheels, and other devices for irrigation which involved labour; twentieth part of the total produce is to be paid as *Zakât*.

And regarding the *Zakât* of animals, detailed study of it may be had from the authentic *Ahadith* of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم or from scholars of *Ahadith*, as we intend in this booklet only a brief account of the subject.

And the minimum amount (*Nisâb*) of silver for the *Zakât* to be due on it, is 140 (one hundred and forty) *Mithqâl*, which is equivalent to 56 (fifty-six) Saudi Riyals.

And the *Nisâb* of gold is 20 (twenty) *Mithqâl* which is equivalent to $11\frac{3}{7}$ (eleven and three-seventh) Saudi Junaih or 92 (ninety-two) grams.

Now, the *Zakât* due on both gold and silver is one-fortieth ($\frac{1}{40}$ or 2.5%) of the total amount (quantity) provided one is in possession of at least the minimum amount (*Nisâb*) as mentioned above, of both or any one of them, and a year has passed over them.

But as regards *Zakât* on the benefit derived from the capital (i.e. original amount), the condition of passing over one year on it, does not apply. The benefit would be included in the capital (original

amount) at the time of calculation for payment of *Zakât*; and likewise the new births in grazing animals will be added to the original number of animals for the payment of *Zakât*, if the original number reaches the *Nisâb* and completes a year without any consideration of time passed over the new births.

The same ruling, as in gold and silver, holds good in the case of currency notes, coins or bills also, whether be it dirham or dinar or dollar or others, provided its value reaches the minimum amount (*Nisâb*) of either gold or silver; and a year has passed over it. When the above conditions are fulfilled, one-fortieth part ($\frac{1}{40}$ or 2.5%) of the total value would be given out as *Zakât*.

The same would apply to the ornaments of the women, made from gold or silver for personal use or lending as loan, when these reach the *Nisâb* and one year has passed over them, in line with the opinions of authentic scholars in the light of Prophet's saying:

«مَا مِنْ صَاحِبِ ذَهَبٍ أَوْ فِضَّةٍ لَا يُؤَدِّي زَكَاتَهَا إِلَّا إِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ، صُفِّحَتْ لَهُ صَفَائِحُ مِنْ نَارٍ فَأُحْمِيَ عَلَيْهَا فِي نَارِ جَهَنَّمَ فَيُكْوَى بِهَا جَنْبُهُ وَجَبِينُهُ وَظَهْرُهُ كُلَّمَا بَرَدَتْ أُعِيدَتْ لَهُ فِي يَوْمٍ كَانَ مِقْدَارُهُ خَمْسِينَ

أَلْفَ سَنَةٍ حَتَّى يَقْضِيَ بَيْنَ الْعِبَادِ فَيَرَى سَبِيلَهُ إِمَّا إِلَى
الْجَنَّةِ وَإِمَّا إِلَى النَّارِ»

“If any owner of gold or silver does not pay the *Zakât* due on him, when the Day of Resurrection would come, plates of fire would be beaten out for him; these would then be heated in the fire of Hell and his sides, his forehead and his back would be cauterised with them. Whenever these cool down, (the process is) repeated during a day the extent of which would be fifty thousand years, until judgement is pronounced among slaves, and he sees whether his path is to take him to Paradise or to Hell.”

It is narrated that once the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم :

أَنَّهُ رَأَى بَيْدَ امْرَأَةٍ سِوَارَيْنِ مِنْ ذَهَبٍ فَقَالَ: «أَتُعْطِينَ
زَكَاةَ هَذَا؟» قَالَتْ: لَا قَالَ: «أَيَسُرُّكَ أَنْ يُسَوِّرَكَ اللَّهُ
بِهِمَا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ سِوَارَيْنِ مِنْ نَارٍ؟ فَأَلْقَتْهُمَا،
وَقَالَتْ: «هُمَا لِلَّهِ وَلِرَسُولِهِ».

On seeing a woman with two bracelets of gold in her hands, asked her whether she gave out the *Zakât* of it. When she replied in negative, he (صلى الله عليه وسلم) said, “Would it please you if Allah puts on you two bracelets made of fire.”

On hearing this, she put off these and said,
 “These are for Allah and His Messenger.”
 (Abu Daud, Nasâi)

Also it is narrated by Umm Salamah رضي الله عنها :

«أَتَيْهَا كَانَتْ تَلْبَسُ أَوْضَاحًا مِنْ ذَهَبٍ فَقَالَتْ يَا رَسُولَ
 اللَّهِ: أَكْثَرُ هُوَ؟ فَقَالَ ﷺ «مَا بَلَغَ أَنْ يُزَكَّى فَرُكِّي
 فَلَيْسَ بِكَزٍّ»

While she was wearing an anklet of gold, she asked the Prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم), “O Messenger of Allah! Is it a *Kanz* (a hoarded wealth).” The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم replied, “If it has been purified (by paying *Zakât* of it), it is not a *Kanz* (hoarded wealth).”

This command is also supported by other *Ahadith*.

As regards the *Zakât* on commercial commodities, its value would be assessed at the end of one year and one-fortieth ($\frac{1}{40}$ or 2.5%) part of the present value would be given out as *Zakât*, no matter its present value is equal to the purchase value or it is more or less. It is in accordance with the *Hadith* narrated by Samurah (رضي الله عنه):

«كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَأْمُرُنَا أَنْ نُخْرِجَ الصَّدَقَةَ مِنَ
 الَّذِي نَعِدُّهُ لِلْبَيْعِ»

“Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم enjoined us to give out *Sadaqah* (*Zakât*) from whatever we prepare for sale.” (Abu Daud)

This includes lands for sale, buildings, cars, machinery for deriving water or any other article obtained for sale.

As for buildings constructed for rent but not for sale, *Zakât* should be paid on the rent after a year passes over it; but the building itself is not liable for *Zakât* as it is not an item for sale. Likewise, personal cars and those for hire are not liable for *Zakât* since they are not meant for sale as the owner has purchased it for his use. And if the owner of the rental cars accumulates the returns up to the amount that is liable for *Zakât*, then he should pay *Zakât* if one year passes over such money whether he had kept it for personal expenses, or for expenses in marriage, or for such as settling debts or buying real estate or for any other purpose; this is in accordance with the evidence of *Shariah* on the obligation of *Zakât*. According to the authentic views of scholars, debt can not be an excuse for nonpayment of *Zakât*.

Similar is the case for the wealth or money of orphans and mentally retarded people; when it reaches the *Nisâb* and a year passes over it the *Zakât* must be paid, and their guardians should give out the *Zakât* on their behalf when a year passes

over the goods. According to the *Hadith* narrated by Mu‘adh, when he was sent to Yemen, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم told him:

«إِنَّ اللَّهَ افْتَرَضَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَدَقَةً فِي أَمْوَالِهِمْ تُؤْخَذُ مِنْ
أَغْنِيَائِهِمْ وَتُرَدُّ فِي فُقَرَائِهِمْ»

“Verily Allah imposes upon them *Sadaqah* (alms) on their wealth to be taken from the rich and then given to the poor.”

Zakât is Allah’s right and so it is not allowed to give it to someone not deserving with the intention to gain his favour; nor a person, who doesn’t deserve it, is allowed to use it for making gains or saving himself from harm. Rather a Muslim should give out *Zakât* to those who deserve it on grounds that they are among the people entitled to it and not with any other intention; it should be given out with good faith and solely to please Allah and in this way he will get Allah’s reward and replacement.

Allah categorizes those who deserve *Zakât* in His Noble Qur’ân:

﴿ إِنَّمَا الصَّدَقَتُ لِلْفُقَرَاءِ وَالْمَسْكِينِ وَالْعَمِلِينَ عَلَيْهَا
وَالْمُؤَلَّفَةِ فُلُوقِهِمْ وَفِي الرِّقَابِ وَالْغَرَمِينَ وَفِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ
وَأَبْنِ السَّبِيلِ فَرِيضَةً مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ ﴾

“As-*Sadaqat* (here it means *Zakât*) are only for

the *Fuqara* (poor), and *Al-Masakin* (the poor) and those employed to collect (the funds) and for to attract the hearts of those who have been inclined (towards Islam); and to free the captives; and for those in debts; and for Allah's cause (i.e. for *Mujahidun*—those fighting in the holy battles) and for the wayfarer (a traveller who is cut off from everything); a duty imposed by Allah. And Allah is All-Knowing, All-Wise." (9:60)

From this glorious verse ending with the two great attributes of Allah تعالى we get the warning that He, Allah تعالى, is aware of the state of His slaves and of those among them who deserve or do not deserve *Zakât*. In this verse Allah further tells us that He is Wise in His *Shariah* and so he does not put anything except in the right position; and hence if anything about His *Shariah* is not clear to anyone, even then he should be satisfied with it and obey its commands.

May Allah grant us knowledge in His religion and sincerity in implementing it, and help us in the performing of deeds leading to His Pleasure, and save from the deeds leading to His Anger. Verily, He is All-Hearer and Nearer. May Allah bless His slave and His Messenger and his family and his Companions.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

In the Name of Allâh, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

From Abdul Aziz bin Abdullah bin Baz to the Muslims.

May Allah guide me and them to the path of the
believers, and grant me and them knowledge of the
Qur'ân and the *Sunnah*. *Ameen!*

Assalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.

The Second Treatise

The Excellence of Fasting in Ramadan and Night Prayers in it, with Important Rulings not known to some People

Then after: This is a brief exhortation on the excellence of fasting in the month of Ramadan and getting up at nights for worship during it, as well as the benefit of competing in it in good deeds; besides, there is also an elaboration of certain vital rules of this fasting that might not have come in the knowledge of some people.

It is an established fact that Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم used to inform his Companions about the commencement of Ramadan and he صلى الله عليه وسلم also used to tell them that the month of Ramadan is a month in which the doors of *Rahmah* (grace) and doors of *Jannah* (Paradise) are opened; while doors of *Jahannam* (Hell) are closed; and during that period the devils are tied. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«إِذَا كَانَتْ أَوَّلُ لَيْلَةٍ مِنْ رَمَضَانَ فَتُحْتَأَبْوَابُ الْجَنَّةِ فَلَمْ يُغْلَقْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَغُلِّقَتْ أَبْوَابُ جَهَنَّمَ فَلَمْ يُفْتَحْ مِنْهَا بَابٌ، وَصُفِّدَتِ الشَّيَاطِينُ، وَيُنَادِي مُنَادٍ يَا بَاغِيَ الْخَيْرِ اقْبِلْ وَيَا بَاغِيَ الشَّرِّ أَقْصِرْ، وَلِلَّهِ عِتْقَاءُ مِنَ النَّارِ وَذَلِكَ كُلُّ لَيْلَةٍ»

“When it is the first night of Ramadan, the doors of *Jannah* (Paradise) are opened and none of them is closed; and the doors of *Jahannam* (Hell) are closed and none of them is opened; the devils are tethered; and a caller calls saying: ‘O those who seek righteousness, get closer; O those who seek evil, be you at a loss; it is upon Allah to bar (Hell) fire,’ and that will happen every night of Ramadan.”

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said:

«جَاءَكُمْ شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ شَهْرُ بَرَكَةٍ يَغْشَاكُمْ اللَّهُ فِيهِ
فَيَنْزِلُ الرَّحْمَةَ وَيَحُطُّ الْخَطَايَا وَيَسْتَجِيبُ الدُّعَاءَ،
يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ فِيهِ فَيَبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ،
فَارَوْا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ
رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ»

“Ramadan has come to you, the month of *Barakah* (blessings); Allah covers you during the month, descends *Rahmah* (grace), removes sins and answers the invocations. Allah sees (in this month) your competitions (for good deeds) and so He boasts to the angels about you. Show Allah what is better (than this) by yourselves; verily the wretched are those debarred from Allah’s *Rahmah* (grace)”

And the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ
مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ
مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا
وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

“Whoever fasts in Ramadan with firm belief and expecting reward on it, his previous sins are forgiven; and whoever gets up in the nights

of Ramadan to worship, with firm belief and expecting reward on it, his previous sins are forgiven; and whoever gets up at nights of *Qadr* during Ramadan with firm belief and expecting reward on it, his previous sins are forgiven.”

The Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم said that Allah says:

«كُلُّ عَمَلِ ابْنِ آدَمَ لَهُ الْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا إِلَى سَبْعِمِائَةِ ضِعْفٍ إِلَّا الصَّيَّامَ فَإِنَّهُ لِي وَأَنَا أَجْزِي بِهِ تَرَكَ شَهْوَتَهُ وَطَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ مِنْ أَجْلِي. لِلصَّائِمِ فَرْحَتَانِ فَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ فِطْرِهِ وَفَرْحَةٌ عِنْدَ لِقَاءِ رَبِّهِ. وَلَخُلُوفٌ فَمِ الصَّائِمِ أَطْيَبُ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ رِيحِ الْمِسْكِ».

“All the deeds of Adam’s sons (people) are for them, and the reward of good deeds is multiplied ten times to seven hundred times, except *Saum* (fasting) which is for Me. And I will give the reward for it. He has left his food, drink and desires for My sake; there are two pleasures for the person observing *Saum*, one at the time of breaking his *Saum* and the other at the time when he will meet his Lord, and the smell coming out from the mouth of a person observing *Saum* is better with Allah than the

aroma of musk.”

There are various *Ahadith* on the benefits of fasting in Ramadan and worshipping at nights therein.

So a believer should seize this opportunity in which Allah has bestowed grace upon the believers. So they should aspire to obey Allah, shun bad deeds and should work hard in performing what Allah has made obligatory on them, particularly offering the five prayers, for, these are the pillars of Islam and the foremost obligation after the two testimonies. It is therefore an obligation upon Muslims (male or female) to establish them and perform them in their right times with submissiveness and composure.

Among the most important obligations regarding prayers (*Salât*) upon men is performing them in congregation in the houses of Allah (*Masjid*) in which Allah has enjoined that His Name be remembered; as He says in His Noble Book:

﴿وَأَقِمُّوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَارْكَعُوا مَعَ الرَّاكِعِينَ﴾

“And offer prayers perfectly (*Iqamat-as-Salât*) and give *Zakât* and *Irka'* (i.e. bow down or submit yourselves with obedience to Allah) along with *Ar-Raki'in*.” (2:43)

Allah also says:

﴿حَافِظُوا عَلَى الصَّلَوَاتِ وَالصَّلَاةِ الْوُسْطَىٰ وَقُومُوا لِلَّهِ قَانِتِينَ﴾

“Guard strictly the (five obligatory) prayers especially the middle (i.e. the best) (*Asr*) prayer. And stand before Allah with obedience (and do not speak to others during prayers).” (2:238)

And He said:

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ هُمْ فِي صَلَاتِهِمْ خَاشِعُونَ﴾

“Successfull indeed are the believers. Those who offer their prayers with all solemnity and full submissiveness.” (23:1, 2)

He also said:

﴿وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ عَلَى صَلَوَاتِهِمْ يُحَافِظُونَ ۝ أُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْوَارِثُونَ ۝ الَّذِينَ يَرِثُونَ الْفِرْدَوْسَ هُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ﴾

“And those who strictly guard their (five compulsory congregational) prayers (at their fixed stated hours). These are indeed the inheritors who shall inherit *Firdaus* (Paradise). They shall dwell therein forever.” (23: 9-11)

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«الْعَهْدُ الَّذِي بَيْنَنَا وَبَيْنَهُمُ الصَّلَاةُ فَمَنْ تَرَكَهَا فَقَدْ كَفَرَ»

“The difference between us (Muslims) and them (*Kuffar*) is prayers and whosoever leaves prayer is disobedient (infidel).”

Next to *Salât* (prayers) in importance is to pay *Zakât*, as Allah says:

﴿وَمَا أُمِرُوا إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ حُنَفَاءَ وَيُقِيمُوا
الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَذَلِكَ دِينُ الْقَيِّمَةِ﴾

“And they were commanded not, but that they should worship Allah, and worship none but Him Alone (abstaining from ascribing partners to Him), and offer prayers perfectly (*Iqâmat-as-Salât*) and give *Zakât* and that is the right religion.” (98:5)

Allah further says:

﴿وَأَقِيمُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَآتُوا الزَّكَاةَ وَأَطِيعُوا الرَّسُولَ لَعَلَّكُمْ
تُرْحَمُونَ﴾

“And offer prayers perfectly (*Iqâmat-as-Salât*), and give *Zakât* and obey the Messenger (Muhammad صلى الله عليه وسلم) that you may receive mercy (from Allah).” (24:56)

The Qur’ân and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم have described that whoever does not pay *Zakât* over his wealth, shall be punished on the Day of Resurrection.

The most important issue in Islam after prayers and *Zakât*, is fasting during Ramadan which is one of the five pillars of Islam as mentioned in the *Hadith* of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم :

«يُنْيِ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ
وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَإِقَامِ الصَّلَاةِ وَإِيتَاءِ الزَّكَاةِ،
وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ وَحَجِّ الْبَيْتِ»

“Islam is based on five (pillars): To testify that there is no God except Allah, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; To offer *Salât* (prayer); To pay *Zakât* (obligatory charity); To observe *Saum* (fasts during the month of Ramadan) and; To perform *Hajj* (pilgrimage to Makkah).”

A Muslim should protect his/her fasting and waking up for worship at nights, from all that Allah has forbidden, be it in deeds or in uttering, because the purpose of fasting is to obey Allah تعالى and glorify His sanctities and fight the self against its desires in obeying his Lord, and get the self accustomed to abstaining from what Allah has forbidden, as the fasting does not mean merely abstaining from eating and drinking the things that break fast. In this sense Allah’s Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم has also said in an authentic *Hadith*:

«الصَّيَامُ جُنَّةٌ، فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ صَوْمٍ أَحَدِكُمْ فَلَا يَرْفُثْ
وَلَا يَصْخَبْ، فَإِنْ سَابَّهُ أَحَدٌ أَوْ قَاتَلَهُ فَلْيَقُلْ إِنِّي
صَائِمٌ»

“Fasting is shield; so when it is a day of fasting one should not indulge in obscene behaviour or glamour, or shout about; if any one quarrels with him or engages him in fight, he should say: ‘I am fasting’.”

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم further said in an authentic *Hadith*:

«مَنْ لَمْ يَدَعْ قَوْلَ الزُّوْرِ وَالْعَمَلَ بِهِ وَالْجَهْلَ فَلَيْسَ لِلَّهِ حَاجَةٌ فِي أَنْ يَدَعَ طَعَامَهُ وَشَرَابَهُ»

“Whosoever doesn’t abstain from false utterings, obscene deeds and absurd acts, Allah does not care for his abstaining from eating and drinking.”

What we learn from all the above reports and from various others, is that it is a must for a fasting person to abstain from all that Allah has forbidden and strictly guard and observe what Allah has made compulsory for him to do. Then, in this way he will get forgiveness, protection from the Fire, and acceptance of his fasting and *Qiyam* (i.e. night prayers).

There are other issues which may be not clear or unknown to the people

One of them is: a person should fast with firm belief and intention of reward; and not as a show-off or for

reputation, or in imitation of other people; rather he should fast on the basis of his belief that Allah has made it obligatory for him to fast, and in hope of reward from Allah. Likewise, passing the night in prayer should be done with full confidence and in the hope of reward for it; and not for any other reason. In this sense, the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«مَنْ صَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ رَمَضَانَ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ، وَمَنْ قَامَ لَيْلَةَ الْقَدْرِ إِيمَانًا وَاحْتِسَابًا غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِهِ»

“Whoever fasts in Ramadan with firm belief and hope of reward, gets his past sins forgiven. And whoever stood for prayer at night with firm belief and in hope of reward, gets his past sins forgiven; and whoever stood for prayer at the nights of *Qadr* (Decree) with firm belief and in hope of reward, gets his past sins forgiven.”

There are certain problems which some people face during their fasting like being wounded, or nose-bleeding, or vomiting or devouring water or petrol through his throat unintentionally; all these things do not vitiate fasting: and whoever vomits intentionally will vitiate his fasting: this is in line with the *Hadith*:

«مَنْ ذَرَعَهُ الْقَيْءُ فَلَا قَضَاءَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَنْ اسْتَقَاءَ
فَعَلَيْهِ الْقَضَاءُ».

“Whoever vomits unintentionally, his fast is not disrupted, but whoever vomits intentionally, his fast is disrupted and he has to make it up.”

The person who is *Junub* (impure after sexual intercourse) and has delayed taking bath up to dawn, should observe fast. Similarly, the woman whose menstrual or labour bleeding has ceased to come before dawn and she delays in taking bath up to the dawn, she should also observe fast. The delay in taking bath up to the dawn to purify oneself from cultic impurity, is not prohibitive for fasting. However, one (he or she) should not delay oneself from purification up to sunrise; rather one (he or she) should purify oneself and pray *Fajr Salât* before sunrise.

Moreover, a man should be prompt enough in this regard so that he may join the congregation for *Fajr Salât*.

Among the things which do not disrupt fasting are: blood analysis and injection, if it (the injection) is not intended for (intravenous) feeding or nourishment. However, if possible, it is better to delay it (i.e. injection) till night. The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم said:

«دَعْ مَا يُرِيْبُكَ إِلَى مَا لَا يُرِيْبُكَ»

“Leave whatever you doubt in, for that in which you do not doubt.”

And the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said:

«مَنْ اتَّقَى الشُّبُهَاتِ فَقَدْ اسْتَبْرَأَ لِدِينِهِ وَعِرْضِهِ»

“Whoever guards himself against suspicion, saves his Faith and honour.”

Furthermore, among the issues regarding which the people are negligent is the composure in *Salât* (prayers), be it the obligatory prayers or supererogatory ones: there are authentic *Ahadith* which prove that composure is one of the pillars of prayers and a prayer is not perfect without it. The composure consists in calmness and solemnity in *Salât* and not to make hurry in the postures of *Salât* till the vertebral columns are set right. Many a people pray in *Tarawih* prayer in a manner that they do not understand it nor are they tranquil in it. They actually move hurriedly back and forth like pecking. Such prayer is imperfect and the person praying does not get reward for it.

Another point regarding which people have misconception is the number of *Raka'at* for *Tarawih* prayer: some people think, it is not proper to perform *Tarawih* prayer less than twenty *Rak'a*; others think, it should not go beyond eleven or thirteen *Rak'a*. All these

are mere thoughts or guessworks on wrong premise; actually they are all mistakes that contravene all the proven facts.

There are *Sahih Ahadith* of Allah's Messenger صلى الله عليه وسلم to the effect that the night prayer is unlimited and hence no limitation as to the *Rak'a*, can be imposed upon it. Rather it is proven that the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم used to pray at times 11 *Rak'a*, at times 13 *Rak'a*, and at times he prayed less than these during Ramadan and also in other days. When he (the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم) was asked about the prayers at night he answered:

«مَنْنَى مَنْنَى فَإِذَا خَشِيَ أَحَدُكُمْ الصُّبْحَ صَلَّى رَكْعَةً
وَاحِدَةً تَوَتَّرَ لَهُ مَا قَدْ صَلَّى»

“The night prayer should be offered by twos; and when one is afraid of approaching the dawn, he should pray one *Rak'a*; it will be the *Witr* for all the *Rak'a* prayed before.” (Al-Bukhari, Muslim)

So the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم actually did not limit the *Rak'a* for the night prayer, neither in Ramadan nor in any other period of the year; so on this basis the Companions رضي الله عنه in the period of Umar رضي الله عنه used to pray at times 23 (twenty-three) *Rak'a* or at times 11 (eleven). And all these are proved from Umar رضي الله عنه and the Companions in his lifetime.

And also some of the *Salaf* (pious predecessors) used to pray in Ramadan, 36 *Rak'a* and 3 *Rak'a* as *Witr* as well, and some others prayed 41. This fact was mentioned by Sheikh-ul-Islam Ibn Taimiyah رحمه الله عليه and also by other learned people. Ibn Taimiyah also mentioned that the issue contains wide scope: it is better to reduce the number of *Rak'a* for the one who prolongs the recitation, bowing (*Ruku'*) and prostration; and for the one who shortens the recitation, bowing and prostration, it is better to increase the number of *Rak'a*.

According to the Prophet's practice it is better to pray either eleven or thirteen *Rak'a* either in Ramadan or in other days, since these are the numbers of *Rak'a* the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم performed most of the times, and because it is most convenient for the performers of prayers and it carries solemnity and tranquillity; and whoever exceeds this number, is not liable to be objected or blamed. Again, it is better for the one who prays with the *Imam*, not to leave him until he finishes the prayer and this is in line with the *Hadith* of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم :

«إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ إِذَا قَامَ مَعَ الْإِمَامِ حَتَّى يَنْصَرِفَ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ قِيَامَ لَيْلَةٍ»

“Verily, if a man stands with the *Imam* during

Tarawih prayer till the *Imam* finishes the prayer, he will get the reward of standing whole night in prayer.”

It is desirable for all Muslims to strive during this holy month of Ramadan with all kinds of worship like supererogatory prayers, reciting Qur’ân with meditation and understanding; most frequently reciting *Tasbih*,⁽¹⁾ *Tahlil*,⁽²⁾ *Tahmid*,⁽³⁾ *Takbir*,⁽⁴⁾ *Istighfar*,⁽⁵⁾ and other supplications as mentioned in *Shari’ah*. A Muslim should also enjoin others for good deeds and prevent from forbidden acts; and also call upon people to Allah. He should also be more sympathetic to the poor and needy persons and strive to do good to the parents, and relatives; render hospitality to neighbours and attend the patients etc. This is in line with the already

(1) *Tasbih* means to recite – سبحان الله (*Subhân Allah*: Allah is glorified).

(2) *Tahlil* means to recite – لا اله الا الله (*Lâ ilâhâ illa-Allah*: There is no God except Allah).

(3) *Tahmid* means to recite – الحمد لله (*Alhamdulillah*: All praise is to Allah).

(4) *Takbir* means to recite – الله اكبر (*Allahu-Akbar*: Allah is the Most Great).

(5) *Istighfâr* means to repent and seek forgiveness before Allah for the past sins of the repentant person either by reciting the formulae described in *Ahadith* or with any words in his own language, sincerely and humbly.

mentioned *Hadith* of the Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم:

«يَنْظُرُ اللَّهُ إِلَى تَنَافُسِكُمْ فِيهِ فَيُبَاهِي بِكُمْ مَلَائِكَتَهُ
فَارُؤُوا اللَّهَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ خَيْرًا، فَإِنَّ الشَّقِيَّ مَنْ حُرِمَ فِيهِ
رَحْمَةُ اللَّهِ»

“...Allah sees (in this month) your competitions (for good deeds) and so He boasts to the angels about you: Show Allah what is better (than this) by yourselves; verily, the wretched are those debarred from Allah’s *Rahmah* (Grace).”

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم is reported to have said:

«مَنْ تَقَرَّبَ فِيهِ بِخَصْلَةٍ مِنْ خِصَالِ الْخَيْرِ كَانَ كَمَنْ
أَدَّى فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ، وَمَنْ أَدَّى فِيهِ فَرِيضَةً كَانَ
كَمَنْ أَدَّى سَبْعِينَ فَرِيضَةً فِيمَا سِوَاهُ»

“Whoever wants the approachment of Allah in this month (Ramadan) by any of his good deeds is like the one who performs obligatory prayer in other months. And whoever performs an obligatory prayer in this month is like the one who performs seventy obligatory prayers in other months.”

The Prophet صلى الله عليه وسلم also said:

«عُمْرَةٌ فِي رَمَضَانَ تَعْدِلُ حَجَّةً - أَوْ قَالَ - حَجَّةً مَعِيَ»

“*Umrah* in Ramadan is like *Hajj*”— or he said
—“like *Hajj* with me.”

There are numerous *Ahadith* and traditions which prove the legitimacy of competing and contesting in the various forms of good deeds in the month of Ramadan.

And He is the Watcher; may He guide us and all the Muslims to all the deeds which lead to His Pleasure, and accept our fastings and night prayers, and set right our state of affairs, improve our conditions and protect us from all kinds of trials and afflictions. As we ask Him for the righteousness in our rulers, and to gather them on Truth, and for it He is the Guardian and the Powerful.

Wassalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuhu.